

Patton Homestead Nonprofit Feasibility Study



Prepared For: The Town of Hamilton
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December 2014



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Is a nonprofit entity feasible, as a management structure for the Patton Homestead?

In response to this question, three key areas were explored during the course of this feasibility study.

A) Is a nonprofit entity feasible, as a management structure for the Patton Homestead? What might its mission be, and is there an existing nonprofit capable of achieving this purpose?

Yes. After careful review, Bevara has determined that a nonprofit structure is most appropriate for the management and planning of the Patton Homestead. At the beginning of the study, Bevara aimed to explore two scenarios. Should a new nonprofit be created? Or is there an existing organization that is both capable and willing. Both have been deemed appropriate and viable solutions, and collectively will form the necessary muscle to effectively oversee the property.

The suggested nonprofit shall be called Friends of the Patton Homestead (FPH), for the remainder of this report. Bevara recommends that FPH partner with at least one other nonprofit organization, with an established identity, in order to achieve the overall purpose of the Patton Property and ensure long term financial stability and capacity.

Based on considerable community and stakeholder input, Bevara has determined the overall purpose of the property to have three primary components; these fitting together at intersecting key points. These core areas provide community benefit, as well as regional opportunity in tourism. This was established via conversations during the community and stakeholder input phase of this study. Benefit to the region, specifically, was established in conversations with the North of Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Historic New England, and Essex National Heritage Commission. As will be shown, these areas align also with the public survey results received by Bevara.



The three proposed core areas of purpose are

Patton Legacy

Community Engagement

Public Service

The newly formed FPH will have primary responsibility for community engagement, event programming and overseeing the Patton Archives. All potential partnerships, and activities, should be judged, by the Town of Hamilton, on their ability to fit the aforementioned core areas purpose.

An existing nonprofit entity (or two) will partner with the Town and FPH, to maintain what Bevara hopes to be a long standing tradition of public service at the Homestead. Depending on the nonprofit's mission, the organization may also play a critical role in the maintaining of the Patton legacy, and community engagement, through carefully selected activities.

B) What are the advantages of creating a new nonprofit? What might be its vision, and potential use of the property?

The creation of the FPH provides five main advantages.

— Allows the Hamilton community to have an active voice in the management of the property.

- Provides a structure for resource development not available to the Town of Hamilton. This includes grants at the local, regional and national level.
- Creates a vehicle for retail, food and beverage, opportunities, in addition to programs to benefit the Hamilton region.
- Provides an important structure for managing the Patton Archives.
- Eliminates many (but not all) of the stresses of property management for the Town. While the Town will have to maintain a facilities and land management plan, the FPH can provide resources to assist with general maintenance , as well as oversee the property's use. The relationship between FPH and the Town would be most like that between a historical society housed in a town owned structure, or a library friends group.

Each of these advantages fulfill needs expressed to Bevara by the community and the Town of Hamilton.

The mission of the FPH (as suggested by Bevara) is simply:

The Friends of the Patton Homestead represents a cross-section of the community, people bound together by a commitment to support the Patton Homestead and its archives, create opportunities for community engagement, preserve, maintain, and promote, the Patton family legacy and commitment to public service.

This mission may be put into action through several possible programs and activities. Bevara's suggestions include the following.

- Oversight of the Patton Archives. Additional information regarding archives management is contained later within this report. From the visitor welcome space noted below, guests can be guided to the archives, which should remain in their existing location. The archives should maintain a separate outside entrance, and additional measures can be added to block the archives, and accompany two rooms, from the activities of the main house.

— Workshops, courses, and other educational programs. The legacy of the Patton family is closely tied to leadership, honor, service, and a genuine appreciation for the land. These values provide the basis from which many programs can be initiated. Workshops and courses (ranging from leadership training and farming to art and military history) will also provide valuable opportunities for engagement with multiple audiences. For example, a series of workshops can be provided for those families wishing to preserve their own family's military legacy, or personal military collections. Another example, the grounds provide a unique opportunity for plein air classes. Further, in the winter, the grounds could be made available to the public for snowshoeing, or other winter activities, with hot chocolate and baked goods provided by Green Meadows Farm at a small stand set up on site. Another idea is an annual fundraising event to commemorate General Patton's birthday. This model has been popular with organizations including the Dwight D. Eisenhower Society (a friends group for the Eisenhower Homestead). The stable provides a viable location for many of these activities.

— Temporary and changing exhibitions. Bevara recommends having two adjoining exhibition spaces. A small permanent exhibition should be established, providing an overview of the home's history and that of the family's occupancy. This can also be the point at which visitors check in once on site. The second space can be used for small changing exhibits. Other organizations have expressed a willingness to provide content and objects for such displays. The barn provides a good space for this purpose.

— Venue rentals. The FPH could oversee rentals of the Patton Homestead grounds and buildings by other groups and individuals. A specific example is the Wenham Museum, which expressed an interest. Members of the military also expressed a desire to rent the space, as did members of the Patton family. The stable is likely the most feasible structure for rental.

— A small retail space may be housed on the property, if appropriate merchandise can be identified. This would best be situated next to any publicly accessible exhibit spaces, and may be permanent or in the form of pop up, temporary, offerings.

— Partnering with Green Meadows Farm, FPH can initiate pop up cafes with visiting chefs, bakers and restaurateurs. These can be open over the weekend, for a month perhaps, periodically during the year. This model allows for testing of any future, more permanent, food and beverage offerings at the property. A pop cafe could be tented, on the back lawn of the main house during the summer months, for example.

The possibilities for programs by FPH is only limited by the imagination of its leadership. It is imperative, however, that all programming fit the established mission of the organization. This is a guiding principle of the nonprofit management model.

C) What are the advantages of working with an existing nonprofit? What might be its potential use of the property?

By partnering with an existing nonprofit, the Town of Hamilton and FPH, will increase capacity for programming and resource development. For example, an existing nonprofit can enter into an agreement with the FPH and/or the Town, providing rental fees for the properties use. A partnership will also ensure that the purpose of community service is fully realized, as an existing nonprofit will provide more programmatic bandwidth in this area. The main house is an ideal venue for such service oriented activities. Also, until the FPH has its own 501(c)(3) status, an existing nonprofit can provide opportunities for fundraising as a quasi fiscal agent.

A handful of organizations expressed an interest in partnering with the Town and FPH. Those who expressed serious interest are the Patton Foundation, Patton Veteran's Project, and Farmsteads of New England, Inc. These organizations, and their capacity and programmatic suggestions, are discussed in detail later in this report.

Establishing the Friends of the Patton Homestead

Once feasibility and need is determined, the next phase is implementation. There are three key questions which need to be addressed as the new nonprofit entity is formed.

1) **WHO?** Who will be involved? Just as it takes "takes a village to raise a child," it takes much more than a solo founder to keep a nonprofit alive. Having lots of people willing to help launch a nonprofit - as board members, volunteers, etc. - can signal broad community support. This appears to be the case, when talking with community members about the Patton Homestead. A great sense of pride, as well as willingness to help, was expressed to Bevara.

The first group of individuals to be identified are the Founding Board of Directors. This important team will carry the organization through its formation. Historically, the structure of charitable nonprofits in America has placed sizable responsibilities on board members. These part-time, usually unpaid, board members are tasked with legal obligations of serving as fiduciaries to ensure that the nonprofit's assets serve a public benefit. Board members also serve the role of visionaries, community leaders, cheerleaders for their nonprofit's mission, and ambassadors to donors, potential donors, volunteers, and clients/consumers of the nonprofit's services.

Bevara recommends a five person Board of Directors be established. This group's preliminary tasks are outlined below. The makeup of the Board should be representative of the three core purposes of the property. Bevara suggests the following makeup for the initial Board of Directors.

- Carin Kale
- Georgina Keefe-Feldman
- Captain Richard Barbato (US Army-Ret.)
- Community at Large Member (2)

It is our firm belief that the Board of Directors should not include any current Town of Hamilton Board of Selectman.

Both Ms. Kale and Ms. Keefe-Feldman bring vast knowledge of the public and nonprofit sectors, as well as demonstrated support for the mission of the FPH. While both ladies both are known to Town officials, Captain Barbato may require some introduction. He is currently the Outreach Specialist for the Lowell Veteran Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, MA, covering Middlesex County, Essex County and Southern New Hampshire. Captain Barbato attended Valley Forge Military College, PA, where he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant into the United States Army. Shortly after the September 11th attacks he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 2003, he was deployed to

the invasion / liberation of Iraq, and for his service received several awards and decorations. After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, he worked as a Tactical Officer at Valley Forge Military Academy. He ultimately returned to his hometown, Ipswich, MA, where he became active in several veterans organizations including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and AMVETS. In 2012 Captain Barbato became the Director of Veterans Services for the City of Gloucester, and in 2014 was named to his current position. He recently enrolled at Salem State University to initiate work on his masters in Social Work, and has a large personal collection of artifacts related to military history.

Community at large members may be solicited through private conversations, or public advertising. A sample board member job description¹ and agreement are contained herein. Once the necessary paperwork is filed, establishing the nonprofit, the Board of Directors can then grow to its full size of seven to nine members (always keeping an odd number for voting purposes).

When asked to define the ideal nonprofit leader, many would emphasize traits such as intelligence, toughness, determination, and vision - the qualities traditionally associated with leadership. These are all important, however, often left off the list are softer, more personal qualities, but they are also essential. Although a certain degree of analytical and technical skill is a minimum requirement for success, studies indicate that emotional intelligence may be the key attribute that distinguishes outstanding performers from those who are merely adequate. Psychologist and author Daniel Goleman first brought the term "emotional intelligence" to a wide audience with his 1995 book of the same name, and Goleman first applied the concept to business with his 1998 classic Harvard Business Review article. In his research at nearly 200 large, global companies, Goleman found that truly effective leaders are distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence. Without it, a person can have first-class training, an incisive mind, and an endless supply of good ideas, but he or she still won't be a great leader. The chief components of emotional intelligence - self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill - can sound unbusinesslike, but Goleman, cochair of the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations, based at Rutgers University, found direct ties between emotional intelligence and measurable results within the nonprofit sector.

¹ Appendix A

2) **WHAT?** What do you need to do? The first step for the Board of Directors is to develop a detailed business plan, considering at the following aspects: mission, organizational structure, 3-year budget, marketing plan, and resource development/fundraising. The Board should consider potential community partnerships, and the skills needed by human resources.

It is also important that the FPH establish performance indicators early, and within its business plan and subsequent strategic plans. Funders and others expect nonprofits to be able to demonstrate that not only are the nonprofit's assets being prudently used, but also that nonprofit's work is having a positive impact, changing and improving lives and communities. The Board should consider how does FPH demonstrate the difference it is making? Whether your process is called "performance measurement," "outcomes evaluation," or something else, the goal is that your Board and staff can make data-driven decisions and you will be able to articulate a compelling reason why donors should support your nonprofit's work.

3) **WHEN?** When should you file paperwork? Basically, there are three steps involving quite a bit of paperwork, followed by ongoing reporting on an annual basis:

Step 1: Incorporating at the Commonwealth level (completing the state forms required to create a nonprofit corporation). This should be done upon completion of the business plan, which will include the information necessary for the filing. Forms and information for the Commonwealth may be found at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cor/corpweb/cornp/npfrm.htm>.

Step 2: Securing your tax exempt status from the federal government². This process can take several months. The organization can operate during this time, however donations will not be tax deductible. There are many kinds of nonprofits - the Internal Revenue Code defines more than 25 categories of organizations that are exempt from federal income taxes. But for most people, a nonprofit refers to what the tax code classifies as a "charitable" or 501(c)(3) organization.

² Appendix B contains a handout from the IRS explaining this process in detail.

What separates a charitable organization from other types of tax-exempt organizations is its purpose: it must benefit the broad public interest, not just the interests of its members. It must serve one or more of the following purposes, which come from the IRS: charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition, or the prevention of cruelty to children or animals. Generally, a public charity must document that it receives at least one-third of its annual income from the public, a unit of government, or an organization formed to raise money.

Step 3: Filing for tax-exempt recognition at the state and local levels (which you can only do AFTER the IRS issues a "Determination Letter" of your organization's tax-exempt status). This means filing FPH as a public charity with the Commonwealth's Attorney General.

Bevara recommends the following timeline for the aforementioned steps. A great deal of concern about a lack of activity at the property was conveyed by the community, and demonstrating forward momentum will assist in building support for the FPH.

March 2015	First Meeting of FPH Homestead Board of Directors File Application of Reservation of Name (MA)
March - April 2015	Recruit Additional Board Members (If Needed)
April - June 2015	Planning Charettes to Prepare Business Plan Finalize Arrangement w/ Existing Nonprofit(s)
Summer 2015	Hold 2 Public Awareness Activities at Homestead Formally Introducing FPH
June 2015	File Incorporation Papers (MA) Obtain EIN (Tax Identification No.) File 501(c)(3) Application (IRS)

Patton Family Archives

The Patton Family Archives, housed at the Homestead, includes military and personal correspondence, photos, diaries and objects from five generations of the Patton family. Contents tell not just the story of one American family, but speak to the times and how life was lived from the early 20th century to the present day.

The Archives contain:

- 213 linear feet of files and manuscripts
- 400 photo albums and scrapbooks
- 300 linear feet of published books
- 300 audio/visual pieces
- 600 objects

Bevara recommends that the management of the Patton Family Archives be transferred to the newly formed Friends of Patton Homestead. While Gordon College has been an able partner, the transfer to FPH will allow for streamlining of duties and property, and allow for the programming and exhibition opportunities noted earlier. Once the FPH has demonstrated its full capacity, Joanne Patton should be approached to discuss the future transfer of Archives ownership. In addition, the Archives could be grown, if a decision is made to accept the collections of other military families.

The protocols, processes, and overall management philosophy of the current Archivist (Carol Mori), are in line with industry standards and should be maintained by the FPH with utmost care and due diligence. Interns should continue their work in the Archives, and can be sought from multiple sources once the arrangement with Gordon College has ended.

Further, Bevara does recommend that the FPH by-laws include a provision indicating to whom the Archives care and/or ownership will be transferred, should FPH not be able to continue in its role. Although a highly unlikely scenario, it is important to have contingency plans in place, as part of an overall risk management plan. The by-laws should also indicate that a qualified Archivist will always be at the service of the FPH.

Financial Considerations

There are numerous financial considerations when establishing a new nonprofit entity. A key component of nonprofit sustainability is the commitment of leadership to strong financial management and planning. But it's also important to make sure everyone is on the same page. Board members and staff who are new to the charitable nonprofit context may wonder, "Does a nonprofit's budget have to break-even?" "Can there be a profit?"

A potentially harmful habit practiced in many community nonprofits is presuming that a break-even budget is mandatory. Leaders may be under the influence of the false but persistent "nonprofits can't make money" myth, as they develop the year's income and expense plan. Like other conventional wisdom, the balanced budget is based on sound concepts, but can become unnecessarily constricting. Instead of "How can we make the budget balance?" the annual budgeting cycle should begin with the question, "What financial outcome does our organization want or need this year?" Different scenarios lead to different decisions about what the budget's bottom line should look like:

1. We need to increase reserves or pay down debt: adopting a surplus budget. When the organization's leaders decide that its cash and other reserves are lower than ideal, the organization can plan to generate more income than expenses, creating surplus funds that can be used in future years. A surplus may also be needed to provide funds for paying down debt or for easing cash flow. The leadership should develop the draft budget by determining realistic income targets that nonetheless outpace expenses. If the organization can deliver on a surplus budget, it will have higher net assets (net worth) at the end of the year, and enjoy a stronger financial position.
2. We can't gain ground now, but we can't lose ground either: the break-even budget. Typically, organizations choose break-even budgets by default and the skin of their teeth. A first cut on the budget shows expenses much higher than revenue, so the staff then tries to figure out how to increase the

revenue number (but still stay close to reality) and decrease the expenses (but not damage programs).

3. There are three typical reasons for adopting deficit budgets. First and rarest, the organization's leadership decides that its cash and other reserves are more than sufficient, and so spending some of those reserves in the coming 12 months is a good idea. They may choose to make one-time purchases or expenditures. At the end of the year, they will have more expenses than income for the year, and thus a deficit for the year.

Bevara recommends that the FPH aim for a break-even budget for the first three years. Once the FPH has a better handle on the expenses, and revenue potential, it can ease into a model of increasing cash reserves. These reserves will serve as the organization's rainy day fund, should its revenue generation be compromised. Only after cash reserves have been established, and any required capital campaigns have been exhausted, should the FPH actively pursue the creation of an endowment. It is anticipated that this time will be between 5 and 7 years into the organization's timeline.

During the course of this study, Bevara looked closely at volunteer led organizations similar in scope to the proposed FPH; including financial history and current resources. The average revenue was \$88,101 and the average total expenses were \$76,481. By year three, the FPH should attempt to be operating with a budget inside these parameters.³ Self sufficiency can be obtained as early as year two, assuming that the FPH leadership provide strong fiscal oversight.

This assumes a volunteer led FPH, with the Archivist as the only independent contractor used in a regular role, and that Joanne Patton's fiscal sponsorship of this role will continue for at least the first three years of the FPH. This also assumes that the Town of Hamilton, FPH, and partnering nonprofit(s) will share the cost of the Property Manager, who will be an employee of the Town. The shared expense may be realized through rent paid to the Town, for example. This assumption also presumes that the Town will continue wholly supporting the salary of a Property Manager until the FPH is established and viable, and the partners nonprofit(s) has been confirmed.

³ This refers to an operating budget, and does not include investments or assets.

The organization should wait to hire additional staff until it has reconciled multiple budgets, and has a clear ability to generate revenue forecasts. For example, the median hourly rate for a Coordinator or Manager is between \$15 and \$20 per hour. Hourly workers at nonprofit organizations may or may not receive additional benefits as part of their compensation. One rule of thumb, which the nonprofit sector uses to estimate the value of volunteer time each year, is to value fringe benefits at 12% of hourly wages. This analysis of volunteer labor also provides a useful comparison to the hourly wages presented here: by their measure, the average hourly rate for a Coordinator or Manager level position is \$21.36 per hour (representing \$19.07 in wages alone).⁴

To remain viable, the revenue side must include multiple sources of income including program revenue, donations, grants, funds from private foundations, etc. To that end, Bevara has attached a copy of the booklet *Strengthening Nonprofits: A Capacity Builder's Resource Library*⁵, to ensure that the Town and FPH leadership, is aware of the revenue sources available. A revenue plan should be a part of any business plan created in the early development of the new nonprofit organization.

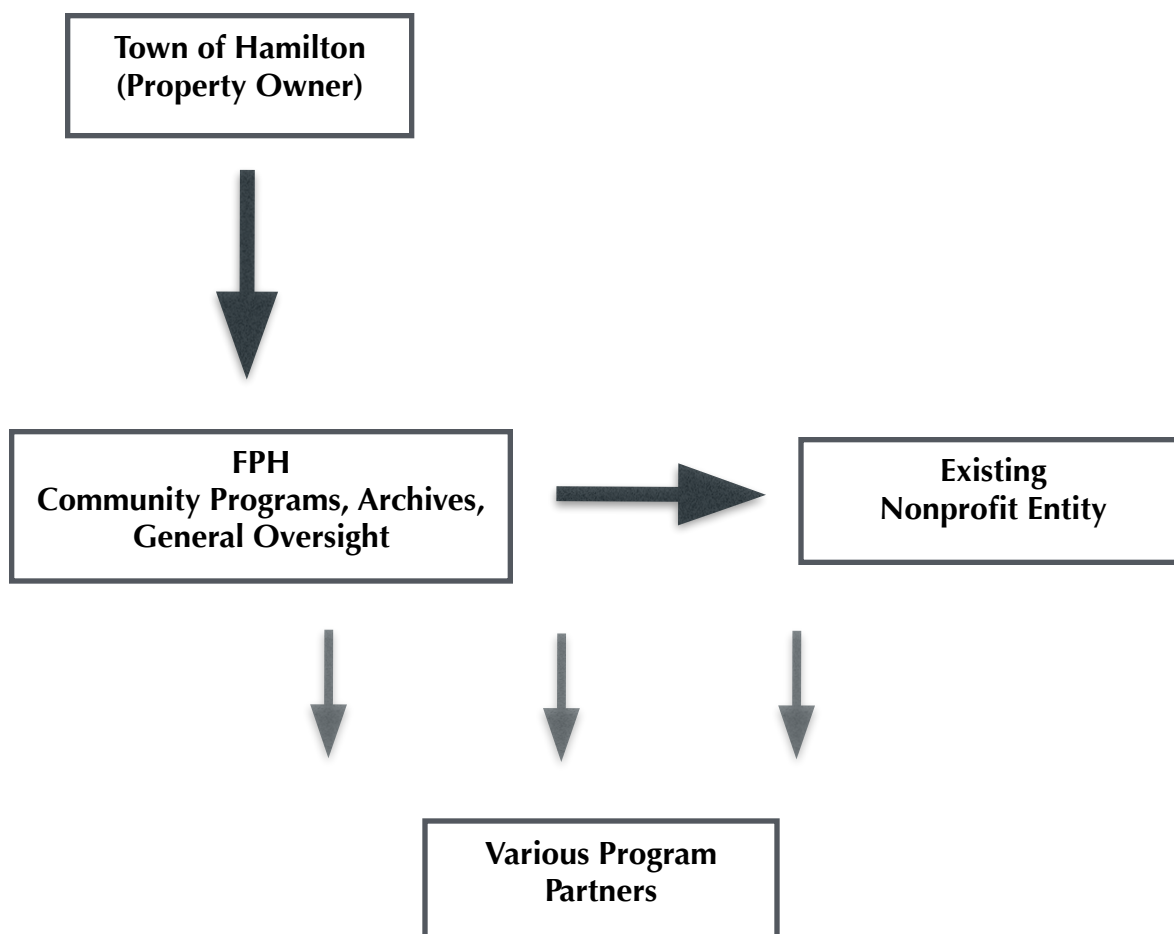
Bevara does not recommend that the FPH be a membership based organization. Membership based organizations require a level of maintenance not feasible for the projected FPH. Rather, community members should be encouraged to make an annual donation. For example, for a \$25 donation, someone might receive an oval bumper sticker that has the initials "FPH" and four stars. For a higher donation, there can be an additional incentive, thus borrowing in part from the PBS model. As an additional incentive, larger donations can be encouraged through the use of monthly payment plans. Such determinations should be made during the business planning process for the FPH.

Potential Primary Nonprofit Partners

As noted earlier, there are three nonprofit organizations which have expressed a serious interest in using the Patton Homestead, and partnering with the FPH. These are discussed in detail below. The relationship between the Town, FPH, and their nonprofit partners(s) is shown below.

⁴ Figures sourced from *National Comparative Museum Salary Study*, American Association of Museums.

⁵ Appendix C



1) **Farmsteads of New England, Inc.** (FNE) is a human services agency that has developed an intentional farming community that caters to the needs of people who have autism and other developmental disabilities. They provide program participants with meaningful work and numerous opportunities for recreation and socialization. Their current farmsteads are located in Hillsborough and Epping, New Hampshire. Attached is information provided by the head of FNE, Deborah DeScenza, M.Ed.⁶ This includes her preliminary enquiry in January 2012, as well as her more recent communication re: the Patton property. FNE's website is www.farmsteads-ne.org.

⁶ Appendix F

Their financials are strong. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, FNE revenue was \$2,376,817 and their total expenses were \$2,320,164.

Although community service is one of the three pillars of purpose for the property, it is Bevara's belief that a focus on veteran's services is more appropriate. Further, FNE is most interested in providing long-term services. This would require considerable on-site construction, and adaptation of existing buildings.

2) **Patton Veteran's Project** is a 501(c)(3) created by Benjamin Patton. The youngest grandson of WWII's General George S. Patton Jr., Patton is co-author of *Growing Up Patton: Reflections on Heroes, History and Family Wisdom* (Berkley-Caliber, 2012). Formerly a producer and development executive at New York City's PBS affiliate, he also operates Patton Productions, LLC, a full-service video production company specializing in marketing and promotional videos and high-end family biographies for private clients. He is a graduate of Georgetown University and is completing a Masters in Developmental Psychology at Columbia University.

The Patton Veteran's Project (also known as I WAS THERE Film Workshops) offers filmmaking workshops for veterans and military families coping with post traumatic stress. By combining the therapeutic value of story telling with the power of digital media, I WAS THERE Film Workshops help participants connect with others and make sense of their service-related experiences through the creation of short films. Their website is www.iwastherefilms.org.

Their financials are reasonable for an organization of its age (founded in 2013), and it has demonstrated a capacity to grow in the coming 3-5 years. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, FNE revenue was \$171,372 and their total expenses were \$187,245. Its primary funding sources have been Wounded Warrior Project (\$64,000), Frank and Emily Smith Foundation (\$55,000), Small Family Foundations and Individuals (\$278,000). After careful review, Bevara believes that the organization also has a Board of Directors with the necessary skill to carry the Patton Veteran's Project forward - this is an important key to future sustainability.

Bevara strongly encourages the Town and FPH to partner with the Patton Veteran's Project. At the very least, space should be provided for use by the I WAS THERE Film Workshops. This may be a source of rental income for the FPH, and should Patton's organization show continuing financial growth, they will be in a position to expand their role at the Homestead.

3) Founded by Helen Patton, **The Patton Foundation** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization devoted to: connecting the legacy of General George S. Patton, Jr. to the contemporary study and practice of leadership; continuing and expanding the Patton family concern for the troops, veterans and their families, and especially by helping veterans mend, heal and reintegrate into their families and communities; and perpetuating the memory of the WWII Generation as an example of service and sacrifice above all.

Attached is information provided by Helen Patton, and her Board of Directors, regarding the Patton Foundation⁷. She has long expressed an interest in the property, dating back to before the gift was made by her mother, Joanne Patton. The attached document was created in response to Bevara's request for additional information, in an attempt to ascertain capacity and financial stability.⁸ Their website is www.thepattonfoundation.org.

The Patton Foundation's footprint in the United States is small, since the organization is young, and until recently Helen Patton's efforts have primarily been based in Europe. That being said, Helen has built quite a following, and regularly uses the U.S. and European media to her advantage. The Patton Trust (www.patton-trust.org) has had a series of successes, including large events, and has an established reputation. Bevara did make enquires in Europe to confirm information regarding the Patton trust.

Anecdotally, the Patton Foundation has raised \$500,000 in the past year. Bevara has not yet seen documentation to verify this. Although the document received by Bevara provided less clarity of capacity than expected, it does contain a number of

⁷Appendix F

⁸ The Patton Foundation makes reference to Bevara as a resource. This is an unsolicited comment, and there were no discussions, with Helen Patton, about Bevara's involvement in the future of the Patton Foundation or Paton Homestead.

strong programmatic ideas and uses for the Homestead. The Patton Foundation has also demonstrated a passion, and strong desire, to work with the Hamilton community, ensuring the best use of the property.

Therefore, Bevara encourages the Town of Hamilton, and FPH, to work with the Patton Foundation in some manner. Since full capacity of the Foundation is still murky, especially with respect to major donors, it is suggested that a single project be identified as a test for future collaboration. During a 12 month period, the Patton Foundation will need to raise the necessary funds for the proposed project. It would be to the Town's detriment to not attempt a path forward with the Patton Foundation. After the project period is completed, a clearer picture should present itself about the Patton Foundation's ability to be the lead partner of the FPH, and Town of Hamilton.

Resources & Potential Program Partners

As noted in previous conversations and documents, many individuals and organizations were consulted during this project.⁹ Among those who expressed a willingness to provide assistance to the Homestead are:

Tim Clark
 Jeffrey (Jeff) Saren
 Hamilton Historical Society
 George Patton Waters, Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation
 Heidi Thunberg, Farm Manager, Green Meadows Farm
 Kristin Noon, Executive Director, Wenham Museum
 Norm Isler, President, Topsfield Historical Society
 Katherine Chaison, Curator, Ipswich Museum
 James O'Brien, General Manager, Topsfield Fair
 Annie Harris, Essex National Heritage Commission
 Ken Turino, Manager of Community Engagement, Historic New England
 Ann Marie Casey, Executive Director, North of Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau
 Kenneth W. Rendell, Founder and Director, Museum of War War II Boston
 Janet van der Vaart, George C. Marshall International Center at Dodona Manor
 General George Patton Museum (Tennessee)

⁹ A copy of the community survey report, submitted in November 2014, is included in Appendix D.

Gettysburg Foundation
Dwight D. Eisenhower Society
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

These are just some of the resources, and expertise, available to the proposed FPH, and Town of Hamilton. The community survey demonstrated support for the Homestead, and core areas of purpose outlined above. Some of these groups are also capable of being program partners. Further, the proposed primary nonprofit partners bring a robust list of human and organizational resources to the Homestead.

Identified Risks & Mitigation

There are common risks that nonprofits face, and Melanie Lockwood Herman of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center discussed them during the 2011 Risk Management and Finance Summit for Nonprofits. The usual nonprofit risks are as follows:

- Financial loss. To prevent this, it helps to have a well-trained, well-informed board.
- Exposures from social media use, misuse and naivete. Risk-management strategies include written guidelines for employees, volunteers and members and a point person to monitor social media.
- Incivility.
- IRS Form 990 and federal tax-exempt status. Losing that status is really easy; it is important to maintain reporting.
- Copyrights and trademarks. Use the copyright symbol. Use work-for-hire agreements with contractors. Respect the work of others.
- Failure to limit a contracting authority and other common mistakes in contracting. Develop a simple policy, clarify who has authority to enter one and obtain legal review, before signing.
- Lack of synchronicity in board policy and practice.

- Failure to understand and manage conflicts of interest. Make sure the policy is easily understood.¹⁰
- Fraud. Understand the inherent risks and fraud schemes.
- Harm to reputation. Remember humility (admit mistakes) and speed (without delay).

There are a handful of key areas that pose a very specific risk to the FPH's success. First, is the Town of Hamilton. It will be critical for the Town to recognize that FPH is an independent nonprofit, working in cooperation with the Town. As leaders within town government change, it will be the FPH's role to make sure that institutional knowledge is kept and shared, the original intent of the nonprofit is maintained, and the Town's promises to the new nonprofit and its partners are kept. A cooperative working partnership between the Town and nonprofit entities must be maintained. To that end, it is recommended that the Town Manager have a nonvoting permanent seat on the Board of Directors, once the FPH has filed its Articles of Incorporation. This will allow the organization to be created outside the shadow of town government. Also, to maintain fairness, a representative from the selected nonprofit partner should also have a nonvoting permanent seat on the FPH Board of Directors, once FPH is established.

Another Town issue which must be mitigated is communication. Throughout the feasibility study process, the voices concerned about the lack of Patton Homestead information have been consistent, even among the strongest supporters. The Town, and the nonprofit(s) involved in managing the Homestead, must demonstrate their mission and capacity through transparency, accountability and the creation of an open dialogue. Local residents should not have to wonder what is happening at the property; they should know and share this information so that they and others can engage in the core purpose of the Patton Homestead. If a lack of communication continues, the Town - and its partners - run the very real risk of losing supporters for the suggestions within this document, and any future ideas generated.

¹⁰ A sample Conflict of Interest Policy is contained in Appendix E

One other issue affecting both the FPH, and its nonprofit partners, is the small but vocal group of antagonists in the community. Although the tendency may be to aggressively engage, or ignore, it will be important to maintain dialogue and ensure that as many voices as possible are heard. This feasibility study set out to do just that, and an important door has been opened. The Town, new nonprofit, and its partner(s), will need to make sure this door is not slammed shut. Further, keeping current Board of Selectman off the FPH Board of Directors will eliminate possible issues with those seen as polarizing in the community.

Outside of general management issues, there are risks pertaining to the property itself. These include a lack of sufficient parking. Additional parking is available at Green Meadows Farm, however other solutions will likely be needed. There are risks associated with the aging buildings on the property as well. A separate report is being undertaken, by the Town of Hamilton and their selected consultant, to ascertain the capital costs required to upgrade and maintain the house and adjoining structures. The Board of the FPH should receive a copy of this report, so that they may play a role in financial planning. This report may also dictate structural use for programs and activities.

Conclusion

Joanne Holbrook Patton has for many years been an active and esteemed member of the Hamilton community. When, in early December 2011, the Hamilton Board of Selectman received a letter from Mrs. Patton offering her home, the Selectmen were eager to explore their options. The gift included the house known as “Green Meadows,” a barn, stable, and 27 acres of surrounding land. It was Mrs. Patton’s express wish that the property not be a financial burden to the Town and that it would be a benefit to the community. The Town formed the Patton Gift Advisory Committee to explore potential uses for the property. The Town also conducted a Title 5 Inspection, home inspection, and land title search. Excited by the offer, Hamilton residents voted unanimously, at Town Meeting on May 12, 2012, to accept the gift.

With the gift now in hand, it is time for the Town to take concrete - and visible - action to ensure that the gift’s intention is upheld within an appropriate model. From the outset, Bevara’s understanding of the gift was that it should benefit the community, and honor the Patton legacy. The process undertaken over the past several months has confirmed this, and Bevara was able to further develop this into the three core purposes for the property, tying these to the suggested mission for a new nonprofit entity.

A new organization is feasible, and sustainable, if successful partnerships with the Town, and an existing nonprofit(s) can be established. By doing so, the Patton Homestead will become an important center for remembering and honoring the Patton family, a place of community engagement, learning and fun, and an important resource for community service aimed, in particular, at veteran's needs. This fundamental mission will position the property as a regional, national and international resource - for generations to come.

Feasibility Study Disclaimer

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